RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

November, 2001 232 Ogden Avenue, Jersey City, N. J. 07307 – (201) 798-0493

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

HARBORVIEW HOLIDAY PARTY

On **Saturday, December 12th**, RNA will hold its Annual Holiday Celebration for the residents of the **Harbor View Health Care Facility**. This year the event will take place in the second floor recreational room and will consist of music, food, drink and gifts for all.

RNA is asking for donations of sugar-free baked goods – homemade and store bought. The baked goods should be brought to the party on that day in throwaway pans or trays. This year we are also requesting donations of men or ladies socks, handkerchiefs and stuffed dolls or animals in order to make gift baskets for the residents.

As usual, there will be musical entertainment for our seniors. However, what is needed most of all is volunteers to help serve the food and drink, give out the presents and most importantly, to spend time with these lovely seniors. If you have children, please bring them along to visit and talk to the residents.

For more information or to drop off gift donations, call **Jack or Valerie Rea** at **653-6916.**

HOLIDAY FOOD & TOY DRIVE

RNA will begin to collect donations for its annual Food and Toy Drive. Dry and canned food products will be accepted. New or used toys (in good working condition only) are also welcome. Please bring your gifts of food and toys to the **November 13th** or **December 11th** meeting. You can also make a monetary donation.

The deadline for donations - either gifts or money - is **Friday, December 14th**. You can drop off your contributions during the week or receive more information by calling **Maria Tuzzo at 659-2245.**

All donations will be given to the less fortunate people living in our community during the holiday season. At the November meeting, the membership will vote where to donate this year's proceeds. In the past, we have made contributions to the **Salvation Army**, **Saint Lucy's Homeless Shelter** and the **Hudson Cradle.**

COMMUNITYUPDATES

117-120 Mountain Road: Property owner **Norman Wilson** is at it once again. Now he is attempting to build a "tennis court" on the roof of his building. On Friday, November 2nd, he began installing 20-foot high fence poles along the perimeter of his building. Complaints have been made to the Zoning Official and the Building Code Official but as of now, nothing seems to have been done to stop him. Incredible as it sounds, Mr. Wilson has been constructing this project for the last seven years despite neighborhood opposition. And there is no end in sight!

This summer he continually worked on the weekends and after hours. It appears that he has someone living on the premises even though there has been no Certificate of Occupancy issued for this location. In addition, there are no current building plans on file at the Building Department and the City is lax in their overview of this project.

This summer he actually hung scaffolding off his roof extending over another person's property to

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HOLIDAYEVENTS

All our friends, neighbors and members are welcome to the November 13th meeting to discuss this year's holiday plans for our neighborhood. In addition, to the two events described in the opposite column, RNA plans to organize its annual **Christmas caroling** during the week before Christmas and its **Holiday party** which is held instead of our December meeting.

In addition, we would like to organize a **holiday lighting of the pavilion** in Riverview-Fisk Park as was wonderfully accomplished by several of our neighbors last year.

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work on his own roof extension. He never even had the courtesy to request permission from the owner. To add insult to injury, the police and the Building Department refused to make him comply with either proper permits or proof of insurance.

It is time that the residents realize that this project is setting a bad precedent for the zoning in our community. If Mr. Wilson can get away with building what he wants, when he wants and for as long as he wants, other owner-developers will follow suit.

All concerned residents are encouraged to call the City to complain about this project and demand that Mr. Wilson comply with the local zoning and building regulations. **Anthony Lambiase, Zoning Official can be reached at 547- 6564** and **Building Code Official Michael Regan can be reached at 547-5068.**

Jehovah's Witness Project: The **New Jersey Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses (CJW)** has submitted plans to build a two story "house of worship" in our neighborhood at New York Avenue and South Street, the site of the old Episcopalian church that burnt down many years ago. The application is requesting variances for parking, setback and lot-size because the project is too big for this location. Neighbors are concerned that the project will have a negative impact on this stable residential community of one and two family houses.

The CJW is requesting a variance to provide far fewer parking spaces that should be required for a building that could potentially accommodate over 400 people on a daily basis. Their plans call for two auditoriums, or large meeting rooms, with adjacent overflow areas. At a minimum, the CJW should be required to provide approximately 43 spaces and not the 19 that they are proposing.

The City should do an independent study to evaluate what impact this project will have on the residential traffic flow and parking in this area. It should not rely on any report commissioned and submitted by the CJW.

This project also requires variances for setbacks in both the side and front yards because the building is too large for the site. The new zoning code requires that all houses of worship must provide a minimum width of 100 feet. Their lot configuration is only 62 feet – 38 feet narrower than required.

Finally, the CJW will be holding services every weekday night and it is not known at this time what the weekend schedules will be. That translates into parking, traffic and crowd problems in this quiet neighborhood on a daily basis.

The community is organizing to oppose the current project application. However, plans are being made to set-up meetings with both the City and the CJW to discuss this project and hopefully convince them to downsize it for the location. For more information, contact **Marje Daly** at **963-6564.**

The Planning Board will hear this application on **December 18th**. The original hearing date of October 30th was adjourned because the CJW did not provide adequate notice to the adjacent property owners within two hundred feet.

520 Palisade Avenue: The Planning Department has begun preliminary discussions with developers concerning the Old Fire House building located on Palisade Avenue between Bowers and South Streets. It appears that they are interested in converting the building into residential condominiums on the uppers floors and retail space on the ground floor. Residents who want to get involved in this project should come to RNA's November 13th meeting.

MEETING MINUTES: October 9, 2001

RNA's October meeting was opened at 7:55 PM by the Chair.

POLICE: The first guest was the new police commander of the North District, **Captain Joseph Pizzalenti**. The Captain stated that for the most part crime was down in our district. The police presence on our streets had resulted in giving out 19 summonses for disorderly groups and four people getting arrested. While some of the police have been deployed to special duty because of the events of September 11th, there are still NTF officers and a special narcotics unit working in the North District, making progress in getting drugs and dealers off the streets.

One of the concerns voiced at the meeting was the need for daily patrolling on Mountain Road, which is attracting loiterers and becoming a litter problem again. It was suggested that this road would be a good candidate for the City's plans for camera surveillance. Another concern was the sometimes-unsatisfactory response of the radio personnel when taking complaint calls. The Captain stated that the Mayor would like to see a better blend of police and civilians in the radio room because civilians are not properly trained to understand the importance of certain complaints. He also suggested that the more information that can be given when calling in any suspicious activity, the better able the police would be to respond. **Lieut. Robert Kilduf** and **P.O. Ed Rakowski** were also in attendance.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT: Our second guest was **Wayne Anderson** of the NID. Wayne gave us an update on the status of our regular **NID Manager Ron Clemente**, who had been in a work accident this summer. Ron is on the mend but still not able to return to work. **Annarose Smith**, a NID Code Enforcement Officer, is now our temporary contact. The new administration would like to reorganize the NID and divide it into the Police Department and the Department of Housing and Economic Development.

Wayne took some of our complaints, including the illegal flea market on Hobson Street and the return of the trash containers on the corner of Franklin and Ogden. **Wayne Anderson can be reached at 547-4654** and **CEO Smith can be reached at 547-5683 or at 4982, voice mail #8029.**

COMMUNITY EVENTS UPDATE: On October 28th, there will be a Halloween parade in Riverview-Fisk Park. Adults are needed to help carry the giant puppets.

On Saturday, November 10th, RNA will host its annual holiday party for the residents of the Harbor View Health Care Facility. Volunteers are needed to distribute refreshments and donations are needed for gift baskets.

RNA also helped long time member **Robert Boesch** celebrate his birthday.

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION: The membership spent the rest of the meeting discussing the following topics of recent concern:

1) Debris is still being dumped on Holland Street;
2) A stop sign is needed at the corner of Bowers and Ogden to control speeding cars;
3) The children's playground in Riverview-Fisk Park is still being used as a dog-run by certain local residents;
4) A local gas station on Patterson Plank Road and New York Avenue does not post its gasoline prices;
5) There is a daily presence of strangers loitering along Ogden Avenue – appearing to be "casing" the houses; and
6) Certain unoccupied houses are being used by trespassers – possibly for illegal activities.

It was suggested that RNA plan a meeting in the future without guests so that we can address these complaints more adequately.

WARD C COUNCILMAN: Steve Lipski, the newly elected representative of the Journal Square Ward, arrived late because of a City Council Caucus meeting held earlier that evening. In response to a question about the chronic mini van problem on Palisade Avenue, Lipski stated that he had recently met with representatives from State Senator Kenny, and Congressmen Rothman and Menendez. They all agreed that the solution was for state regulation of these commuter vans and committed their offices to solving the problem.

When asked when the street repaving would start for the long overdue Palisade Avenue project, the Councilman promised to make inquiries and get back to us. [*Since the October meeting, the contractors have milled Palisade Avenue in preparation for the new street paving, which should occur before Thanksgiving.*]

He also stated that he had discussions with NJ Transit (NJT) regarding the blasting of the PATH tunnel under southern part of our neighborhood. Unfortunately, NJT appears to be ignoring the complaints about their hours of blasting and the resultant noise, dust and rodent dislocation.

In response, the Councilman announced that he and fellow Councilman Mariano Vega had recently tabled a proposal to build an elevated station for the Hudson Bergen Light Rail at Congress Street and Paterson Plank Road because the request lacked

the necessary engineering information needed to make a decision.

He also mentioned that the City is considering extending the municipal permit-parking program to Beacon and Jefferson along Palisade Avenue.

Finally he suggested that all the local block and neighborhood associations in his ward should meet together to discuss their common concerns.

The meeting closed at 10:20 PM.

Maria Tuzzo, Secretary

HALLOWEEN PARADE

[*The following two articles describe a magical event that took place in Riverview-Fisk Park on October 28th. A special acknowledgement to the organizers Sandy Martiny and Beverly Ruggia-Brown of Studio Heights and Stephanie Bailey for her puppet designs.*]

Puppets in the Park and the Heights Halloween Parade on Sunday, October 28th turned out to be a smashing success! At least 50 Halloween revelers were in attendance representing many costumed themes. Most evident to this reporter's eyes however, were the Princesses from all the best royal families in the Heights and even more distant places who turned out to march. Adults dressed as well, if not sillier than the children. One recognizably bearded Raggedy Ann (or was he an "Raggedy Andy"?) was documented in Monday's Jersey Journal along with other, more beautiful residents.

Those who participated enjoyed sharing the burden of the huge puppets crafted by neighborhood children as they marched en route through the Park, up Ogden Avenue to Palisade Avenue, down Ogden again to the park pavilion for a welcome candy toss. Those who caught sight of our procession were charmed and enchanted by the scene.

Thanks go out to all the fabulous volunteers who contributed to the puppet-making workshops and the parade and those who made donations of time, materials and candy in preparation for this delightful event.

Sandy Martiny

Lead by an impressive elephant and guarded at the rear by a large yellow dog with brown spots, the Studio Heights-organized Halloween Parade stepped off from Riverview-Fisk Park on Sunday, October 28th. About sixty grown-ups and children gathered to parade the large papier-mâché puppets through the neighborhood. The project, a brainchild of Studio Heights, was to give neighborhood children something to do in our park. For the past several weeks, local youngsters gathered to create the giant puppets, which included a parrot, a butterfly and a giraffe.

The puppets were the focal point of the parade, but the participants got into the spirit of the holiday by wearing costumes or headdresses and masks. Project organizers Beverly Brown-Ruggia and Sandy Martiny guided the group down Ogden Avenue to South Street and then out to Palisade Avenue and back to Ogden through Franklin Street. The spirit and fun didn't falter although some of the puppets had an encounter with some trees and required some minor "in route" repair.

The parade was a success and maybe a forerunner of many other such events. It was the most fun, I've had at a Halloween event in years.

Maria Tuzzo

SUCCESSFUL PARK CLEAN-UP

On Saturday, November 3rd, local residents gave Riverview-Fisk Park a fall cleaning from Palisade Avenue to the Park's lower walkway. These volunteers picked-up garbage, raked leaves, swept up broken glass, cut overgrown brambles, pulled weeds and planted bulbs for next spring.

David Casto, Maria Tuzzo, Joan and Jim Earls, Jamie Earls, Vito Brunetti, Doris Brown and Margie Daly devoted their time and energy to spruce up our neighborhood. A special thanks goes to RNA member **Joe Sadowski** for organizing the event and Parks Department's **Matt Hogan** for supplying the tools and supplies. The **Incinerator Authority** also supplied two dumpsters on Franklin and Hobson Streets as part of RNA's fall cleanup.

There was also had a very successful clean up of Holland Street on October 20th organized by **Heights Hope N.A.** as part of their campaign to restore the cobble stoned road as a pedestrian walkway.

RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER - PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND!

Millennium Towers

RNA's fall fundraising efforts to pay the legal bills incurred in our fight against the Millennium Towers project have been very successful. However, RNA and Hoboken's **Coalition for a Better Waterfront**'s are still requesting donations – of any size - from our generous neighbors, members and friends. As a matter of fact, we recently attended a small but successful fundraiser at Pohlman's Hall.

Both associations along with the City of Hoboken are now in the Appellate Division fighting the developer's attempt to overturn the Superior Court's decision to stop this over-scale, ill-conceived project.

If you have not yet contributed but would like to make a donation, please send a check or money order payable to "Riverview Neighborhood Association" with the notation "MTP", to RNA, 232 Ogden Avenue, Jersey City, N.J. 07307. All donations are tax-deductible and corporate matching grants are accepted.

RECYCLE YOUR GARBAGE & DISPOSABLES – IT'S THE LAW!

The **Jersey City Incinerator Authority** recycles the following materials:

PAPER: Newspapers, magazines, junk mail, school paper, office paper, computer paper, telephone books, all cardboard boxes & corrugated boxes, cereal boxes, pasta boxes, laundry detergent boxes.

PLASTICS: Milk cartons, drink boxes, plastic milk containers, food containers, household cleaner containers, laundry detergent bottles, shampoo bottles

GLASS: Soda bottles, beer bottles, food jars, liquor bottles.

CANS: Aluminum, tin, steel, (no chemical or paint cans).

WEDNESDAY is our neighborhood pick-up day for recycling. For more information, call **432-4645**.

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savethepalisades.org

Visit the *savethepalisades.org* website to find out about local Heights news. To receive notices about upcoming events, join the e-mail list by sending your name and e-mail address to: *info@savethepalisades.org*.

As a voice in our community, this website is dedicated to the preservation of our Palisades cliffs.

BULLETIN BOARD

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

- Councilman Bill Gaughan: Ward D: **547-5485**
- Councilman Steve Lipski: Ward C: **610-1009**
- Maureen Corcoran, Mayor's Action Bureau: **547-5554** (formerly Constituent's Services)
- NID: CEO Smith: **547-5683** or **547-4982, voice mail #8029**
- Parking Authority: to report parking complaints: **653-6969, ext. 127**
- PSEG Lighting: to report a non-functioning light in the Parks or streets: **1-800-832-2221**

POLICEBEATPOLICEBEAT

Residents should contact their **Neighborhood Task Force (NTF)** police officers if they have a problem, a safety concern or knowledge of criminal activity through the North District's Community Service voice mail at **547-5719** or through the front desk at **547-5350**. When leaving a message, include your name, telephone number, street address, the nature of the problem and the date and time of the message. For emergencies, call **547-5477** or **911.**

In addition, anyone with information about illegal drug use and/use drug dealing should contact the **JCPD Narcotics Unit** at **547-5391**. All calls will be strictly confidential.

CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR NEWLSETTER

Tell us what you think about what you just read in this newsletter. Are you satisfied with the quality of life in your community? Send articles, comments and recipes to 232 Ogden Avenue.

Next deadline is November 25th.

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HELP ORGANIZE HOLIDAY
EVENTS FOR OUR COMMUNITY AT
RNA'S NEXT MEETING ON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13 at 7:30 PM

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ETERNAL NATURE

The leaves turn color one by one,
They fall to earth in silent splendor,
Then rustle along in the cooling breeze
To time and nature they surrender.

Each year we view this wondrous sight
That nature lays before our eyes,
And though we've seen it countless times
Our hearts still quicken in surprise.

For Mother Nature yields herself
To stark and naked branches,
And will no longer shield us
From winter's cold advances.

And as old winter settles in
To stay awhile and visit
Mother Nature takes a well-earned nap
So in spring her beauty will be exquisite.

Maria Tuzzo

COMING EVENTS

11/10: Harbor View Holiday Party
Saturday, 1:30 PM

- Corner of Ogden Avenue & Franklin Street
- Needed:
  - Volunteers
  - Donations of food & gifts.
- For more information, see article on page 1.

11/13: Monthly RNA Meeting: Tuesday, 7:30 PM

- Harbor View Health Care Facility
  - Corner of Ogden & Franklin
- **Agenda:**
  - **Organizing Holiday Events**
  - **Updates on development projects in our community**